

West Lafayette Human Relations Commission - Meeting Minutes

7:00 pm, August 17, 2010

West Lafayette City Hall

Members Present: Charlie Shook (Chair), Zarjon Baha, Angelica Duran, Asako Iikubo, Vidhya Iyer, David Rosenthal (Secretary), Tom Logan (Attorney)

Members Absent: Kim Reisman, Susan Thomas, Phil Subeck

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Shook at 7:02pm.

Mr. Baha moved for approval of the agenda; Ms. Iikubo seconded. **Motion to approve agenda passed with unanimous consent.**

The minutes from the May 18, 2010 meeting were presented for review. Mr. Baha moved for approval of the minutes; Ms. Duran seconded. **Motion to approve May 18, 2010 minutes passed with unanimous consent.**

CONTINUING BUSINESS

Follow up on survey results: Mr. Shook discussed using the results of the survey as an opportunity to increase community awareness of the Commission's work and asked the members for ideas regarding outreach to underrepresented groups.

- Ms. Duran suggested working with Purdue's Latino Cultural Center, (LCC), St. Boniface and La Tapatía Market to target the Latino community.
- Ms. Iyer suggested targeting the International Center at Purdue, Married Student Housing, and FoodMart, and volunteered to follow up with these places.
- Mr. Baha suggested publishing a column in the Purdue Exponent to explain the procedures of the Commission to students.
- Mr. Rosenthal noted the need to rewrite and redesign the Commission's brochure

Proposed Amendments to WLHRC Policy:

- A. *Amendment to the HRC Ordinance.* Mr. Shook discussed the proposed changes, which include the addition of a mediation option available at any point during the complaint resolution process. The amendment would not mandate mediation but would make it an option if both parties agree. The amendment would also remove provisions which require the Commission to meet only at City Hall between certain times.
- B. *Resolution extending HRC authority to cases of discrimination on the bases of gender identity, gender expression, and US veteran's status.* The resolution would allow the Commission to educate, investigate and conciliate complaints, but not to perform binding adjudication. This would give the Commission the same authority it has to address complaints of discrimination based on sexual orientation, which was established by resolution in 1993.

Mr. Shook moved that the Ordinance Amending WLHRC Procedures and the Resolution Affirming Action Taken by the WLHRC be approved by the Commission and submitted to the Common Council for consideration on October 4, 2010. Ms. Duran seconded. The motion was approved with unanimous consent.

Mr. Shook reported that both items would be introduced by the Commission and sponsored by Mayor John Dennis at the West Lafayette Common Council meeting on October 4, 2010 and asked Commission members to be in attendance at that meeting. The resolution will take effect upon approval at first reading, while the ordinance will require a second reading at the November 2010 Common Council meeting.

Mr. Shook commended Mr. Logan for his work in preparing the legislation and expressed his gratitude.

Joint meeting of the Lafayette, W. Lafayette, and Tippecanoe County Human Relations Commissions: Mr. Shook reported that the meeting would be held on Wednesday, September 29, 2010 at 5:30pm at Morton Communication Center and would include dinner and a discussion of shared objectives. He will send additional information to members via email.

Diversity Roundtable (DRT) Report: Ms. Iyer reported that she attending a meeting of the DRT subcommittee on the Diversity Summit and would give a report at the Commission's next meeting. Mr. Shook asked her to attend full DRT meetings as a representative of the WLHRC during the months of September through December 2010, which she accepted.

Central website for Tippecanoe HRCs and the DRT: Mr. Rosenthal reported that progress was slowed due to the departure of David Blakesly, who was coordinating this effort. However, the work continues and a report will be available at the next Commission meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Public notice of Commission meetings: Ms. Duran reported that the schedule of WLHRC meetings on the City's website was not accurate and suggested that this be looked into.

Fairness in the criminal justice system: Ms. Iyer reported that she had recently become aware of a lack of fairness in the local criminal justice systems for individuals who lack strong English language skills or lack understanding of the dominant culture. Mr. Logan responded that this may not be an issue for the Commission to address, but noted that the Indiana Supreme Court is undertaking initiatives to address this issue. Mr. Duran suggested that this may be a good issue to discuss at the upcoming Diversity Summit.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE: There were no comments from the audience.

Ms. Duran moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:03pm. Ms. Iikubo seconded. The motion to adjourn passed with unanimous consent.